

Two Accidents and a Curse

Accident One

In 2006, I took an accident victim to hospital. Lying on the road, old man had no external wounds or bleeding. He was breathing but not responding. With the help of a nearby road-side fruit seller, I managed to get the old man into my car and took him to nearby hospital. It was a big government hospital. A Security Guard helped put the old man on the stretcher. A ward boy advised to get some tests done first, such as CT scan and X rays, while he arranges a doctor. I took him from one room, from one corridor to another by myself. Lab technicians helped me to get him on and off the stretcher. He twice vomited on me twice, but it did not deter me from helping him.

After the tests, a lab technician asked me if I had informed his family? I nodded, “No”. We then, checked his pockets and found his cell phone and identification cards. His name was Paramanand. Selecting names in his contact list, which appeared as family relatives, such as “Brother Ramesh”, or “Sister Sunita”. I started called them but they refused, they did not know anyone with this name, in spite of giving all his details from the ID documents.

Lab technician was hearing the telephone conversations. He advised, “Start calling from Alphabet A in Contact List”. And I did, I kept calling, kept repeating the same sentences, “This person Parmanand has met with an accident. Your number was in his telephone, can you please...” but people either disconnected abruptly or said they said they don’t know anyone Parmanand or said they were in their village or directly said they cannot help at this point of time.

Having reached half way through his contact list, I noticed battery of his cell phone was more than half drained. Lab technician advised to call from my own cell phone and use his phone to view contacts. He had become a helpful friend in situation. Within 15 minutes, I reached the end of his contact list but no one gave a positive reply on contact details of his family. Their apathy was utterly shocking. People sounding indifferent and annoyed as if I have disturbed them by this trivial call.

I was giving commentary on responses of people and my emotions reaction to it to lab technician, when he gestured towards tears in the closed eyes of Parmanand on stretcher. Ouch! we just realised, maybe he is hearing all of our conversations and negative comments on his contacts. To cover my callous remarks on the situation, lab assistant started joking to lighten the situation by adding solace. He said, “It is morning hours, people must be busy, they will surely return our calls, lets for few minutes”. Lab technician took the cell phone from my hand and forcefully remove the cheap, old and broken plastic cover of his cell phone and threw it away at the dustbin, “Useless”, he called it and kept the cell phone on stretcher, near disillusioned Parmanand, whose social trust was broken, his contacts whom he had saved and carried in his pocket have betrayed him.

After 5 minutes, one man returned my call and said that he has conveyed the message to his son, who is on his way and will call me when he reaches hospital. This was the only call returned. His son came an hour later.

Parmanand was discharged by the hospital, after day in observation. I also corrected my wrong assumption that poor people have strong community adhesion and are more helpful to each other as humans because they do not have many financial resources.

Accident Two

In 2005, It was a regular evening walk in a local park. Same daily visitors, birds chirping and sounds of gossips on the benches, children playing and cycling around the park... Suddenly, we heard a loud sound of a collision, coupled with a shout of pain. An accident? We the people in the park thought and ran towards the corner noise came from...

Yes, indeed, an accident has taken place. I saw a young boy on pavement, trapped between the boundary wall of the park and a car. Car driver was trying to reverse the car, but cycle was so much entangled between the car's front bumper and pavement. I ran to help the boy and also caught hold of the car driver. I dialled Police to report the accident. There was no blood or wounds but boy was crying in pain. Thereafter, in the Driver's car itself we took the boy to a nearby hospital.

On reaching the big private hospital, as soon as informed the nurse that I have brought an accident case. She shouted, "Accident Case!". She also informed the someone on phone. "Are you his relative?", she asked. I replied, "No".

Contrary to my expectations of being asked to sign forms, response was a military like action! In no time, the child was on stretcher, surrounded b 5-6 ward boys and nurses. While wheeling stretcher up on the inclined surface at entry, Doctor was slapping the child on his cheek and ask him repeatedly, "What is the Papa's phone number? What is your daddy's phone number?" And they took him inside the medical room....

In the corridor, I was waited for the arrival of police. A curious middle-aged man, asked me details of the accident. When I expressed my praise on the urgency and heroic manner of medical staff, he warned me, "Beware of Masks! Don't be over impressed, all this theatrical drill. They are professionally trained on their public behaviour – that is how to appear in power and in control, for their safeguard, good public image and to justify their high fees!" It is all to appear good, it is not a true reflection of their quality of service". I wondered if I should trust him...

Anyhow, the boy did not survive, to my regret the boy passed away some hours later...

Absurdity of life makes her victim helpless and undesired. It reduces a life to an existence not more wanted than a blade of grass! In these two accidents, one was a biologic death and the other was a death of social trust, a death of belongingness. The rich live with doubt, fear and lack of trust, while not-rich are abandoned to die. Life, illusions, greed, apathy, violence, politics are the trending keywords of modern society.

Irony of life is that everyone lies but no one likes to be lied to. Irony is like that death is not a one-time biological incident, it is also daily abandonment, daily absurdity and daily alienation in society. Love, Support and Care - if we are not able to find it within our homes, it would be impossible to find it outside. Modern society is focused on appearance and power. Indifference, selfishness and little madness have become compulsory life skills.

**What is remaining in such modern society?
Whatever that is, is that worth living? Does such society deserve our children?
O devil, don't you bother, we have destroyed our human society, ourselves!**

A Curse

They are not useful,
these modern people,
fake smiles, fake laughter, false friendships,
are these modern people

Newspaper, internet or television,
do not have the courage to show mirror
to these modern people

well equipped, well trained,
but illusions, apathetic, miser and greedy,
all these modern people

we think from heart, we speak from brain,
they think from brain, speak from heart,
these modern people

we fool, keep these contacts close to our heart,
a little attached, a little human, little devil,
these modern people

both died in accidents,
because of apathy and mistake,
in graceful appearance and proudness, you ignored all tears,
thousands of congratulations, to these modern people

like a dried old useless plant,
threw him out, these modern people,
killed a young child, like a flower bud,
crushing like a cigarette under feet,
of these modern people

Don't know why they call this world beautiful,
these modern people,
One day I will see your cruel city burning from the sky,
It is my promise,
to these modern people

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